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ABSTRACT

The education service districts (ESDs) in Oregon have been a strong force for staff development since 1849, a decade before statehood. This report outlines the organization of Oregon school systems over the past century, highlighting the creation of county superintendents, rural school districts, special education programs, and tax standards enacted in 1977 and 1979. The 1981 legislative session further amended the ESD budgetary and levying authority by limiting its tax levy to a 6 percent yearly increase. (Provision was made for an increased special levy for handicapped, bilingual, and other special programs.) The 1983 Oregon Action Plan states that "local school districts shall develop and implement staff development programs related to district evaluation systems and school improvement plans." Oregon Public School Standard 606 requires that local districts provide appropriate staff development activities related to program improvement, and Standard 715 also requires districts to have staff development policies and and plans. Other relevant statutes, requirements, and enforcement measures are briefly discussed. Current statutes authorize the Oregon Board of Education to eliminate noncomplying ESDs via merger with an adjoining ESD meeting the standard. The 1987 legislature provided $5.4 million in local school district grants to provide assistance to beginning teachers through mentorships and to stimulate school improvement and professional development. The Oregon Department of Education also provides mentor training and technical assistance. The department also provided 1988 funding for consortia, professional development centers, and ESD Association motivating activities. (MLH)

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CASE STUDY OF STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY USE OF ESA AND STAFF DEVELOPMENT

Dr. Milt R. Baum, Oregon Associate State Superintendent

"ESA Involvement In Staff Development"

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PRE-Statehood Status

The ESDs (Education Service Districts) in Oregon have been a strong force for staff development since 1849, ten years prior to statehood. The counties served in the capacity of intermediate school districts (ESAs), a tradition that continues after 139 years in thirty of Oregon's thirty-six counties as of 1988.

An act passed on September 5, 1849 by the First Legislative Assembly for the Territory of Oregon is probably the earliest legal record of the predecessor to the present office of county school superintendent - the school commissioner. The law stipulated the commissioner's duties, salary and term of office. In 1852, a law was passed transferring most of the school commissioner's duties to the county commissioner. However, the office of school commissioner was not eliminated as such: in 1854, the office reappeared when the term "county school superintendent" was used for the first time in a territorial act creating a school district in Oregon City.

On February 14, 1859, Oregon became the thirty-third state and adopted a state constitution, but the laws of the territory continued in force until replaced or repealed. In 1862, the Legislature enacted a comprehensive education law which firmly established the office of county school superintendent and shaped its development for several years.

Start of Statehood

In 1872, the Legislature established the position of state superintendent of public instruction, to coincide with the enactment of a law establishing a uniform course of public instruction in the common schools of the state.

The office of the county school superintendent was modified little until 1887, at which time laws pertaining to certification of teachers were amended and several additional duties were assigned to the office. The superintendent was to aid, instruct and inspire teachers (in this connection, an annual county teachers' institute was authorized for the purpose of instructing teachers and those wishing to teach).

In 1911, two significant changes were made. The county superintendent no longer issued teachers' certificates, except temporary certificates and special certificates which districts could issue in certain circumstances; the state superintendent issued all other certificates. Even so, due to the growing number of school districts (In 1917 Oregon had 2,556 school districts), the supervisory function of the office was increased, which led to the provision of county educational boards in all counties with more than sixty school districts.

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1945 - The Legislature created the "rural school district" in all counties except those operating under the county unit law; it was passed by voters in the general election of 1946. The rural school district consisted of all districts in the county except first class districts. By 1946 the 2,556 school districts had reduced to 1,608.

The primary purpose of the rural school district was to provide for equalization of the cost of school operations at the county level and to hold annually at least three local teacher institutes or educational meetings.

The board reviewed the operating budgets of component districts, had the authority to make alterations within certain limitations, approve the budgets and levy a rural school district tax to meet the total costs of the budgets as approved.

State Special Education

1959 - The Legislature enacted a law to improve the educational program for handicapped children in the state. The law authorized the state superintendent of public instruction to provide special education programs for handicapped and mentally retarded children; such programs could be provided on a regional or county basis, and the state superintendent could delegate responsibility for program administration and operation to the school district or the county school superintendent. The law also stipulated that the state would reimburse costs for program operation over and above the cost of instruction for other children in the district, not to exceed one and one-half times the per capita costs of instructing other children.

Standards for ESDs

The 1977 Legislature enacted other important changes regarding ESDs (Education Service Districts). It mandated that standards be established for ESDs by the State Board of Education and made significant changes in the statutes regarding the fiscal responsibility and taxing authority of ESDs. It terminated the responsibility for fiscal equalization except for the four ESDs voluntarily operating under the "old law" (Harney, Gilliam, Wallowa and Wheeler) and placed a statutory limitation on the availability of a significant portion of ESD tax bases without the approval of the voters.

In 1979 the State Board of Education adopted a set of standards for ESDs as mandated by the 1977 Legislature and the 1983 Legislature enacted authority for ESD boards to serve as local contract review boards if they desired to do so.

Between 1977 and 1983, the statutes concerning ESD tax levying authority underwent a number of changes. For twenty years, ESDs had levied a county-wide property tax designed to provide financial support for local school districts while attempting to equalize property tax rates for education. Chapter 840, O.L. 1977, repealed this provision in all ESDs except Grant, Harney, Wallowa and Wheeler. Simultaneously, the Legislature increased the Basic School Support Fund appropriation and provided that a portion of each local district's allocation would be used to offset the former equalization portion of the ESDs' certified levy. This offset provision operated during 1977-78, 1978-79, and 1979-80, and under authority of Chapter 131, O.L. 1981, again in 1982-83.

In 1979, the Legislature placed a statutory limit on that portion of the ESD levy that could be used for operational, administrative, and resolution purposes, and increased the portion of the levy designated for handicapped special education programs. It further directed each ESD to develop, in cooperation with the Oregon Department of Education and local districts, a comprehensive plan for services to local school districts, which numbered 312 in 1980.

The 1981 Legislative session, in Chapter 610, further amended the ESD budgetary and levying authority by limiting its tax levy for operational, administrative, and resolution services to not more than the greatest amount in the last four years plus 6%. Provision was made for an increased special levy for handicapped, TAG, bilingual, or ESL programs. A third provision described the statutory limitation to be placed on an ESD's 1983-84 and subsequent years' levy for (1) operational, administrative, and resolution as the greatest amount in the last four years plus 6%; and (2) for special education, an amount equal to 6% of the difference between the ESD tax base and the greatest amount levied for this purpose during the last four years. The remaining portion of an ESD's existing tax base, if any, could not be used unless specifically authorized by the voters.

Additional Staff Development Mandates

The Oregon Action Plan initiated in 1983 stated that "Local school districts shall develop and implement staff development programs related to district evaluation systems and school improvement plans." Oregon Public School Standard 606 requires that local districts provide appropriate staff development activities related to program improvement. Standard 715 related to personnel requires districts to have policies and plans for staff development. ODE (Oregon Department of Education) monitors and enforces these standards.

The 1985 Legislature impacted the ESD in several significant ways.

First, the responsibility both for registering students who are being taught at home and for determining whether satisfactory educational progress is being made by those students was assigned to the ESD superintendent. Also, the discretion of the boundary boards was expanded via the added requirement that the cumulative impact of prior changes and future contemplated boundary petitions must be considered by the board when acting on a current petition.

The operation of education service districts (ESDs) in Oregon is governed by legislative statutes and state agency rules. Many of these requirements have been incorporated by the State Board of Education into a set of state standards for ESDs.

In addition to the language of ORS Chapter 334, there are a number of other statutory requirements spread over Oregon laws which also must be observed. They deal with financial, staff and personnel procedures, education programs, the conduct of agency business and board leadership, and with the control of students in those ESDs where services are provided to students directly.

All of these requirements are reviewed on standardization visits which are made to each ESD once every five years. The current statutes authorize the Oregon Board of Education to eliminate ESDs, which do not meet state standards, via merger with an adjoining ESD which is standard.

Additional Funds for Staff Development

The 1987 Legislature passed legislation providing $5.4 million in grants to local school districts to provide assistance to beginning teachers through mentorships and for school improvement/professional development efforts. The grants are competitive and are administered through the

Oregon Department of Education (ODE). Training of mentors and technical assistance in the form of consultants, workshops, and handouts are also provided by ODE. These programs are not state mandated but are state supported and evaluated.

ESDs in Oregon are heavily involved in staff development. In implementing the new school improvement/professional development programs funded by the 1987 Legislature, the ESAs may form consortiums to provide technical assistance and staff development activities for their districts. In addition, the Legislature provided $240,000 for technical assistance sites to assist those districts attempting to implement the new programs. ESDs may be the established sites for this service. Currently, the ESD network is co-sponsoring CBAM (Concerns-Based Adoption Model) training for ESA, ODE and local district staffs to assist in change efforts at the local district level. The ESAs are often the sites for ODE staff workshops and curriculum inservices that are regionally based. The state mandated Essential Learning Skills have required numerous regional workshops for local district personnel which have been facilitated through the ESAs.

In addition, a few ESAs have formed consortiums with their local districts for staff development support and services. By sharing resources many new programs have been implemented, e.g., "PRIDE" and "SORD" consortiums.

ESD Association

The Oregon ESDs have an Association under the control of an Executive Committee made up of five (5) zoned ESD Superintendents and five (5) zoned Board Members. The Executive Committee sets the policies and objectives of the Association.

The ESD Association serves as a very important network for Education in Oregon. The members of the Association link all the school districts together so the State Department of Education can communicate with all school districts at the same time within the network.

During 1988 in cooperation with the ESDs the Oregon 3 million dollar Mentor Training Program will provide for a selected group of beginning teacher support training sessions. The program in addition to the local support will involve one state inservice day in the summer, two follow-up training sessions during the year and a statewide conference at the end of the school year.

An additional 2 million dollars will be awarded to selected school districts for School Improvement/Professional Development (SIPD) Programs.

Professional Development Centers will be allocated a separate fund of $240,000 to provide technical assistance to districts not funded. The ESDs will provide many of the Professional Development Center sites and services needed for staff development activities in their areas.

Over half (165 of the 304) of Oregon's school districts are members of the National Staff Development Council.

The main purpose of the Oregon ESD network is to coordinate the available resources of the Department of Education and ESDs. The Network will support jointly selected areas of school improvement for the school districts, and the coordination of programs managing resources for a better dollar value.

After each State Legislative Session the ESDs are given additional responsibilities to provide more services to school districts that are aimed at improving educational programs for the students of Oregon.

In summary the State Department of Education and the ESDs have very extensive programs through contract to provide state-level services. As a result of the contracts and resolution services the ESDs are providing over seventy-two (72) different types of programs for the Oregon School Districts in 1988.

OUTLINE

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"ESA Involvement in Staff Development"

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Dr. Milt R. Baum, Oregon Associate State Superintendent

Past Education:

Post Grad.		University of Denver - Research Design - 1975
Post Grad.		Stanford University - Administration Evaluation - 1962-63
	1960	Ed.D. Oregon State University - Personnel Procedures
	1951	M.E. Willamette University - Administration
	1949	B.S. Willamette University - Math-Science

Past Experience:

School District Superintendent - 1953-65
Oregon Associate Superintendent - 1965-Present
Ex. Secretary Oregon ESDs - 1965-Present
Oregon Delegate to AASA - 1988
Who's Who in Education AASA - 35 years
Adjunct Professor in Law and Finance - 1953-Present

Past AERA Presenter on the following topics:

Effective Budget Building
Child Development Studies
Team Teaching and Ungraded Programs
School Finance Studies
A 100 Point Checklist for School Budgets